

**LITTLE FERRY BOARD OF EDUCATION
LITTLE FERRY, NJ**

FILE CODE: 3542.2

 X **Mandated**
 Monitored
 X **Other Reasons**

Policy

SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM ARREARS

The school meal program shall make a nutritionally adequate meal (breakfast and/or lunch) available to every student and shall operate on the most economically feasible basis. It shall be operated in strict compliance with all laws and regulations pertaining to health; sanitation and safety; internal accounting; employment practices; nutritional standards; costs of meals; and periodic reporting required by New Jersey law.

The Board of Education believes that regularly consumed nutrition helps maintain the students' energy and facilitates concentration, supporting student achievement (see board policy 3542.1 Wellness and Nutrition). Therefore, it is the expectation of the board that students with the assistance of their parents/guardians come prepared for school each day with lunch/breakfast or meal money. Students repeatedly forgetting their breakfast or lunch meal or their meal money may be subject to consequences including parent/guardian conference, loss of privileges and detention according to the school code of student conduct.

Qualified students whose families have a financial hardship may apply for assistance according to policy 3542.31 Free or Reduced Price Lunches, Milk. The procedures for the administration of the free and reduced price meal program of this school district will be the same as those prescribed in current state and federal laws and regulations.

The board shall strive to make affordable meals available to all students. Students who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals or milk may receive school lunch through the school meal program for a fee that is approved by the board. Any student who has a hardship but does not qualify for free and reduced price lunches or milk, may be considered for other assistance on a case by case basis.

The purchase of meals through the school program shall be optional and shall not prevent any student from bringing their own lunch or breakfast to school.

The School Business Administrator shall be responsible for the accounting and tracking of revenues and expenses generated by the school meal program. The principal or his or her designee shall oversee the notification of parents/guardians for the payment of charges and arrears associated with the school meal program. Being in arrears shall be defined as being behind in meal payments due, resulting in debt or liability to the district.

The Board of Education understands a student may forget to bring breakfast and/or lunch, as applicable, or money to purchase breakfast and/or lunch to school on a school day. When this happens, the food service program will provide a student a breakfast or lunch with an expectation payment will be made the next school day or shortly thereafter. However, there may be circumstances when payment is not made and a student's school breakfast/lunch bill is in arrears. The school district will manage a student's breakfast/lunch bill that is in arrears in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21 and this Policy.

No Breakfast and/or Lunch Served After SECOND NOTICE

In the event a student's school lunch or breakfast bill is in arrears, the student will continue to receive breakfast and/or lunch and their account will be charged accordingly. The Principal or designee shall contact the student's parent to provide notice of the amount in arrears and shall provide the parent a period of ten (10) school days to pay the full amount due. If the student's parent does not make full payment to the Principal or designee by the end of the ten school days, the Principal or designee shall again contact the student's parent to provide a second notice that their child's breakfast or lunch bill is in arrears. If payment in full is not made within one week from the date of the second notice, the student will not be served school breakfast and/or lunch, as applicable, without payment for that day's breakfast or lunch beginning the eighth calendar day from the date of the second notice.

A parent who has received a second notice their child's breakfast and/or lunch bill is in arrears and who has not made payment in full within one week from the date of the second notice will be requested to meet with the Principal or designee to discuss and resolve the matter.

SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM ARREARS (continued)

A parent's refusal to meet or take other steps to resolve the matter may be indicative of more serious issues in the family or household. In these situations, the Principal or designee shall consult with and seek necessary services from both the County Board of Social Services and/or the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency, as appropriate.

When a parent's routine failure to provide breakfast and/or lunch is reasonably suspected to be indicative of child abuse or neglect, the Principal or designee shall immediately report such suspicion to the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency, as required in N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10. Such reporting shall not be delayed to accommodate a parent's meeting with the Principal or designee.

If the student's breakfast or lunch bill is in arrears, but the student has the money to purchase breakfast or lunch, the student will be provided breakfast or lunch and the food service program will not use the student's money to repay previously unpaid charges before a meal is purchased.

The food service program will prevent the overt identification of children through the method of payment used to purchase a meal and whose breakfast or lunch bill is in arrears.

In accordance with the provisions of the United States Department of Agriculture, this Policy shall be provided in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households transferring to the school or school district during the school year. The school district may post this Policy on the school or school district's website provided there is a method in place to ensure this Policy reaches all households, particularly those households without access to a computer or the Internet.

This Policy shall also be provided to all school and food service staff responsible for the enforcement of this Policy, including school administrators to ensure this Policy is supported. The food service program will comply with all meal charge policy requirements of the United States and New Jersey Department of Agriculture and N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21. (N.J.S.A. 18A:33-21 United States Department of Agriculture SP 23-2017 - March 23, 2017).

The policy shall be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.

First Reading: August 16, 2018

Adopted:

Key Words

School Lunch, Food Service, Nutrition, Wellness